

*Washington, DC* - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) this week sent a letter to President Barack Obama requesting expedited approval of additional federal disaster assistance for Ulster and Orange counties in response to Tropical Storm Lee. Hinchey has requested that both an Individual Assistance designation and a Public Assistance designation be made to ensure that homeowners, renters, local governments and small businesses in Ulster and Orange counties affected by Tropical Storm Lee will be eligible for assistance through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

"Ulster and Orange counties took a one-two punch from Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee," wrote Hinchey. "Just when some of these communities began rebuilding from Irene, a second round of flooding from Lee washed away much of their hard work. Now they need to start the recovery work again. Additional federal assistance is needed to help families, farmers, small businesses and local communities to once again begin to recover and rebuild from massive flooding and wind damage. Many New Yorkers will not be able to afford repairs without FEMA's Public and Individual Assistance programs and activation of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program statewide. I ask that you approve the Governor's request as quickly as possible."

Two weeks ago, Hinchey spoke with FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate to request expedited federal disaster assistance for New York counties affected by Tropical Storm Lee, specifically singling out the need to reassess Orange and Ulster counties after a second round of flooding. While the appropriate disaster designations were made by the President in response to Hurricane Irene, designations in response to Tropical Storm Lee are still pending in the Hudson Valley. Hinchey has also introduced legislation and has been working with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to expedite and provide additional assistance to farmers affected by the flooding and is supportive of efforts to provide crop insurance retroactively to New York farmers in need.

The full text of Hinchey's letter follows. A PDF is [here](#).

September 22, 2011

The Honorable Barack Obama  
President of the United States  
The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Obama:

Thank you for all the support you and your administration has provided to New York in response to recent natural disasters that caused widespread damage across the state. I am writing to urge you to quickly approve supporting Governor Andrew Cuomo's request for Individual and Public Assistance through FEMA for homeowners, renters, local governments and small businesses in Ulster and Orange counties affected by Tropical Storm Lee.

Ulster and Orange counties took a one-two punch from Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. Just when some of these communities began rebuilding from Irene, a second round of flooding from Lee washed away much of their hard work. Now they need to start the recovery work again. Additional federal assistance is needed to help families, farmers, small businesses and local communities to once again being to recover and rebuild from massive flooding and wind damage.

Many New Yorkers will not be able to afford repairs without FEMA's Public and Individual Assistance programs and activation of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program statewide. I ask that you approve the Governor's request as quickly as possible.

Thank you again for all the assistance the federal government has provided New York and for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Maurice D. Hinchey